

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

May 5, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader McCarthy, and Minority Leader Schumer:

As Congress considers any further legislation regarding a response to COVID-19, we ask that it include immediate financial assistance to state and local governments that, through no fault of their own, have had their economies devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result of shutting down the majority of economic activity in New York to prevent the spread of this terrible virus, our local governments have incurred massive financial losses due to expenses and lost tax and fee revenue. As you are aware, New York is the epicenter of the pandemic. To put the outsized strain on New York in perspective, New York has the highest infection rate in the country at 27.13 percent of U.S. cases, as well as the most positive cases with 312,618. And, sadly, 24,560 New Yorkers have succumbed to COVID-19, more than the next six states combined.

State and local governments are currently faced with massive budgetary shortfalls due to COVID-19. Bankruptcy is not the answer. Direct federal assistance in Phase IV legislation is critical. Direct funding would help support first responders, teachers, nurses, sanitation workers, transit workers, and many more, all of whom are vital contributors to our communities. We needed them before the pandemic, we need them now, and we will continue to need them as we get through this together.

While we applaud the relief the Coronavirus Relief Fund in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provided to states and local governments with more than 500,000 people, the fund did not provide any direct aid to local governments with less than

500,000. We must ensure there is robust funding for all levels of government in a Phase IV bill, including local governments of any size. We also must expand the flexibility of the funding for state and local governments to ensure that previous direct aid and future direct aid can be used to offset revenue losses as a result of COVID-19, not just COVID-19 related expenses. We further ask that state governors be required to certify that such funds will not be used to supplant or reduce direct financial assistance currently provided to local governments.

Every dollar in aid will help spur the economic activity needed to get our nation back on its feet. We urge you to provide the needed direct financial assistance so that the State of New York and its municipalities can continue to provide the essential services our districts need now and going forward.

Sincerely,



Lee Zeldin
Member of Congress



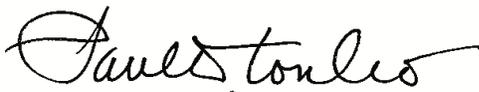
Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



Anthony Brindisi
Member of Congress



Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



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Member of Congress

Antonio Delgado
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Member of Congress

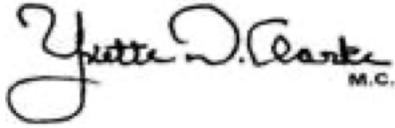
Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

Hakeem Jeffries
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Jerrold Nadler
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Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



José E. Serrano
Member of Congress



Max Rose
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable Nita M. Lowey, Chairwoman, House Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations